

## DR. WILLIAM F. SNOW: FORMER CALIFORNIA DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### A Testimonial Dinner

With a recent invitation to attend a dinner in honor of Dr. William Freeman Snow in the Empire Room of the Waldorf-Astoria, New York City, on Friday evening, October 1, 1937, came a transmittal leaflet containing comment on the public health services rendered by Dr. William F. Snow, Director of the American Social Hygiene Association, and one time director of the California State Board of Public Health. The esteem in which Doctor Snow is held in the East should be of special interest to his former classmates of Stanford and to members of the medical profession of California who had the privilege of working with him when he was the State Health Officer.

Forty years ago this autumn an energetic, studious and purposeful young man entered the Cooper Medical College, which was later to become Stanford University's School of Medicine. While still a student, William Freeman Snow made his first permanent contribution to public health education by organizing the Student Guild, which continues to this day to be a source of substantial health benefit to Stanford students.

After graduation Doctor Snow soon became a leader in hygiene and public health education. He was a member of the Stanford faculty from 1900 to 1919. He served the California State Board of Health as epidemiologist, and in 1909 became the executive officer of the Board. During the next five years California took high rank among the efficient state health departments of the country. Doctor Snow's pioneer efforts in progressive health activities were watched with interest throughout the United States.

Trained as an ophthalmologist and conditioned in the liberal social attitude of Stanford University, Doctor Snow early turned his attention to the much neglected health problems of syphilis and gonorrhea. As the young and vigorous health officer of California he attracted the attention of such men as President Emeritus Charles W. Eliot of Harvard and Dr. Prince Morrow of New York, the leaders of pioneer American organizations attempting to promote what was then called sex hygiene. At the same time President David Starr Jordan of Stanford was heading the popular movement against commercialized prostitution. It was these three great leaders who saw the necessity for a voluntary agency with the broadest possible approach to the problems of social hygiene and who, therefore, in 1913 merged several existing societies to form the American Social Hygiene Association and persuaded Doctor Snow to come East and pilot it.

Doctor Snow encouraged the interest in and support for his new organization of philanthropists such as John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Julius Rosenwald, Cleveland Dodge, and many others. His success made such an impression on the leaders in public health work that he was marked for immediate draft when this country entered the war in 1917. He pointed out that America must face the menace of syphilis and gonorrhea to the fighting efficiency of millions of young men to be inducted into the armed forces.

At the beginning of the war and during his service as a medical officer under Surgeon-General Gorgas, Colonel Snow was largely instrumental in showing the need for a national social hygiene program and obtaining support for it from the Congress and the Secretaries of War and Navy, as well as the National Council for Defense and its semi-official advisory bodies, the General Medical Board, and the National Red Cross. This program for the first time was founded on the conception that the venereal diseases are not necessary concomitants of military or naval life. As a result a program was adopted which included chemical prophylaxis, the reduction of the opportunities for infection by the repression of prostitution in the environs of military posts, the education of the military and civil population, and the plentiful provision of wholesome recreation facilities. So successful was this program that the American armies set up an all time world record for low incidence of venereal diseases, and an impressed Congress passed the Chamberlain-Kahn Act, which set up the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board and the Bureau of Venereal Diseases in the United States Public Health Service, and

appropriated money to bring the whole social hygiene program to the general population. Forty-one states participated, local clinical facilities increased more than tenfold and environmental protective measures in many states were greatly stimulated before federal funds were exhausted. The work of venereal disease control in the United States Public Health Service has survived as one of the permanent gains for social hygiene of the greatest importance and usefulness.

All during this war period Doctor Snow, with the backing and support of the American Social Hygiene Association, had his finger in every health pie. Social hygiene suddenly and, it seemed, miraculously, appeared in the programs of numerous key organizations and nearly always Doctor Snow could be dimly discerned in the background. The amount of labor he performed was colossal. He seemed to be driven by some high compression engine denied to other men. In fact his nickname was "The Driven Snow."

In a recent address at the Hotel Pennsylvania, Professor Winslow of Yale said: "In this whole first phase of practical disease control in the United States, William F. Snow was the stage manager, even though he rarely occupied the limelight in his own person."

It was only natural that in the international scene also Doctor Snow should be asked to help in the direction and casting of the men and women who were struggling with the age-old problems of prostitution and the international traffic in women and children, as well as the world-wide ravages of syphilis and gonorrhea. The Committee of Experts, of which he was chairman from 1924 to 1929, alone among all those under the jurisdiction of the Council of the League of Nations, came to a unanimous agreement on a constructive program for procedures against the so-called white slave traffic. Unique in unanimity, the result was a tribute to the leadership of Doctor Snow as well as to his indefatigable pursuit of his objective. He has participated actively, as an officer, in many international health and welfare organizations. With several other authorities he went to Puerto Rico where, under Governor Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., they investigated the conditions which were injurious to the health of the children of the Island.

Among the other great contributions of Doctor Snow to public health, not only as an educator but as an administrator, have been his lifetime interest in the Conference of State and Provincial Health Authorities of North America, of which he was formerly president, and the organization of the National Health Council. Doctor Snow urged the national voluntary health agencies to merge in the interest of more efficient public service. While not wholly successful in persuading these bodies to carry this coordination to completion, Doctor Snow did bring about the formation of the National Health Council of fourteen agencies housed in close proximity, mostly under one roof and using many common services. As president of the Council for many years, his judgment and vision entered largely into the development of the constituent groups even in fields quite remote from social hygiene. He was at one time a member of the boards of directors of sixteen national health and educational organizations. Charles W. Eliot once wrote, "I believe Doctor Snow to be the most effective man in the field of public health—not 'one of the most effective men.'"

He was and remains the inspiration and adviser of organizations, too numerous to mention, devoting important attention to sex education, the control of syphilis and gonococcal infections, and repression and prevention of commercialized prostitution. State and city health authorities, religious, educational and social organizations, medical societies and schools, leaders and workers in every category of agency have turned to him as the great leader, teacher and administrator in social hygiene. Doctor Snow has miraculously found time, encouragement, and wisdom for all of them, never seeking recognition or reward.

Among the younger men who watched Colonel Snow in his work during the war was one who, after a long apprenticeship in the Public Health Service, was to be called to the spotlight by Franklin D. Roosevelt. Dr. Thomas Parran was made Commissioner of Health for New York State by Governor Roosevelt and later Surgeon-General of the United States Public Health Service by President Roosevelt. Immediately after his appointment as Surgeon-General, correctly sensing that the public mind had been prepared by education for a dramatic move, Doctor Parran

sounded a tocsin of war against syphilis. Declaring that the major objective of his administration would be the control of syphilis, he awoke the nation to its responsibilities. In the press and on the platform, from radio and screen came the most amazing publicity break of the century. Everywhere people were eager to be implemented and to act.

Thus the long labors under Doctor Snow's guidance suddenly came to fruition throughout the United States. The skill with which the stage had been set during a quarter of a century was almost overlooked in the dramatic appearance of a new and brilliant leader challenging the nation to conquer syphilis. But Doctor Parran was prompt in his recognition of the nation's debt to Doctor Snow and his followers, warning the public that official agencies could not do the job alone, that the work of the American Social Hygiene Association was needed now more than ever so that real progress might be made.

Not to allow this fervor to die before the gains could be consolidated became the problem of Doctor Snow and the American Social Hygiene Association. He had often proposed a National Social Hygiene Day to be devoted to discussion and education in communities all over the country. Viewed skeptically by many when it was actually undertaken, the success of this project was breath-taking. In more than five hundred communities, large and small, people came together on or about February 3, 1937, and considered what they could do locally and nationally to aid in the conquest of syphilis, the promotion of sex education, and the prevention of commercialized prostitution.

Just as during the World War Doctor Snow was called and enlisted "for the duration," so now he has been called by Surgeon-General Parran to aid and advise the Federal Government in its campaign against syphilis. In the capacity of consultant and field marshal pro tem, William F. Snow is the perfect liaison officer between the health officials and the voluntary social agencies and citizen organizations who are fighting shoulder to shoulder in a great campaign that will never end until syphilis has been conquered.

By a man's work you shall know him. Countless thousands in America and abroad are happier and healthier because of Doctor Snow's work. Those who know him personally admire him as a man aside from his rich contribution to human welfare. A brilliant social strategist, an inspiring teacher, a wise adviser, a skilled administrator and organizer, an indefatigable worker, he is also a kind and sympathetic friend, a loyal comrade, modest in success, cheerful in adversity, tactful, gentle, humorous, unselfish, courageous, a truly great man whom it is a privilege to follow and a pleasure to honor.

## CALIFORNIA INFANT MORTALITY RATES RISE

Infant mortality rates in California for 1936 are slightly higher than for 1935. Increases among races other than white are conspicuous, with the single exception of negroes. While an appraisal of infant welfare should cover a period of years in order to make a fair and just evaluation, there is a significance in the trend of such rates during a single year. An opportunity is provided, at least, to profit by a study of the conditions in each community and to apply those attributes that are known to contribute to the saving of infant lives. The following tables provide data upon infant mortality in California cities and counties in 1935 and 1936:

### Infant Mortality

County-City	1936 No. Rate	1935 No. Rate
Alameda County (exclusive of) .....	14 53.0	14 50.4
Oakland .....	186 44.2	171 41.7
Alameda .....	7 23.0	2 7.3
Berkeley .....	31 40.2	23 31.8
San Leandro .....	4 53.3	4 44.9
Albany .....	8 34.5	11 51.6
Hayward .....	4 48.2	5 52.1
Piedmont .....	.....	.....
Alpine .....	.....	.....
Amador .....	1 15.1	2 26.0
Butte County (exclusive of) .....	25 68.1	19 54.6
Chico .....	9 37.2	13 50.4
Calaveras .....	2 33.3	.....
Colusa .....	9 55.2	10 61.0

County-City	1936 No. Rate	1935 No. Rate
Contra Costa (exclusive of) .....	8 27.5	16 48.0
Richmond .....	14 49.3	14 52.2
Martinez .....	12 42.8	17 62.0
Pittsburg .....	8 94.1	5 36.8
Del Norte .....	3 56.6	2 27.4
Eldorado .....	5 33.1	3 28.3
Fresno County (exclusive of) .....	164 87.3	98 54.2
Fresno .....	25 36.1	32 46.6
Glenn .....	5 37.9	8 52.6
Humboldt County (exclusive of) .....	11 39.1	13 50.6
Eureka .....	25 61.4	18 47.6
Imperial County (exclusive of) .....	93 150.5	65 103.8
Brawley .....	42 118.3	59 150.9
Calxico .....	10 68.0	12 72.7
El Centro .....	15 72.5	6 35.9
Inyo .....	5 56.8	7 106.1
Kern County (exclusive of) .....	140 108.2	109 101.1
Bakersfield .....	30 44.6	31 54.7
Kings County (exclusive of) .....	45 135.1	26 89.6
Hanford .....	18 73.8	20 86.9
Lake .....	5 59.5	2 24.4
Lassen .....	21 84.3	13 56.3
Los Angeles County (exclusive of) ..	162 33.8	147 31.4
Los Angeles .....	986 56.2	880 52.1
Alhambra .....	2 7.4	7 31.5
Long Beach .....	86 34.7	83 38.0
Pasadena .....	39 50.6	12 17.6
Pomona .....	22 54.9	16 49.4
Santa Monica .....	23 27.5	22 28.6
Glendale .....	27 25.0	23 23.3
Monrovia .....	5 64.9	2 23.8
Redondo Beach .....	2 64.0	3 54.5
Whittier .....	5 15.1	18 60.0
South Pasadena .....	2 111.1	7 125.0
Arcadia .....	.....	1 71.4
Bell .....	13 21.5	9 19.9
Beverly Hills .....	.....	2 333.3
Burbank .....	4 19.4	7 40.0
Compton .....	9 34.7	9 41.9
Culver City .....	3 19.3	3 25.0
Hawthorne .....	2 14.5	7 51.1
Huntington Park .....	9 26.7	15 44.9
Inglewood .....	8 19.3	10 23.9
Lynwood .....	1 90.9	2 90.9
Maywood .....	3 21.6	1 14.3
Montebello .....	.....	3 142.8
Monterey Park .....	7 31.5	6 33.7
San Fernando .....	7 50.3	10 83.3
San Gabriel .....	6 125.0	1 23.8
South Gate .....	12 28.0	10 26.8
Torrance .....	12 46.0	2 8.2
Madera .....	41 127.3	29 105.4
Marin County (exclusive of) .....	3 21.7	1 7.6
San Rafael .....	5 30.1	6 41.9
Mariposa .....	4 125.0	2 60.6
Mendocino .....	28 85.4	11 35.2
Merced County (exclusive of) .....	41 84.7	34 69.8
Merced .....	9 43.7	7 36.8
Modoc .....	14 157.3	8 88.9
Mono .....	3 333.3	1 142.8
Monterey County (exclusive of) .....	42 65.6	35 61.8
Monterey .....	3 35.7	6 66.7
Pacific Grove .....	4 66.7	3 56.6
Salinas .....	7 46.0	7 35.3
Napa County (exclusive of) .....	5 39.4	4 34.2
Napa .....	5 31.2	4 32.8
Nevada .....	11 44.7	19 84.4
Orange County (exclusive of) .....	56 68.8	71 88.4
Santa Ana .....	17 40.6	28 66.5
Anaheim .....	13 101.6	5 39.4
Fullerton .....	10 50.0	4 23.4
Orange .....	16 39.8	17 47.1
Placer County (exclusive of) .....	11 51.9	12 59.7
Roseville .....	4 90.9	2 37.0
Plumas .....	4 30.8	2 21.5
Riverside County (exclusive of) .....	72 102.4	59 86.1
Riverside .....	57 72.0	33 42.8
Corona .....	13 85.0	7 42.7
Sacramento County (exclusive of) ..	9 65.3	9 42.6
Sacramento .....	120 59.4	101 52.2
San Benito .....	10 71.4	14 107.7
San Bernardino Co. (exclusive of) ..	69 72.5	43 47.2
Redlands .....	11 41.0	11 46.6
San Bernardino .....	102 90.7	69 69.9
Ontario .....	9 62.5	9 58.1
Colton .....	8 63.0	10 61.3
San Diego County (exclusive of) .....	19 43.1	18 44.7
San Diego .....	139 44.2	111 38.7
Coronado .....	1 17.8	2 37.7
National City .....	9 36.0	11 49.5
San Francisco .....	303 41.6	251 35.2
San Joaquin County (exclusive of) ..	52 61.7	67 81.6
Stockton .....	25 38.9	34 55.3
Lodi .....	7 43.2	4 27.8
San Luis Obispo Co. (exclusive of) ..	4 19.4	10 51.8
San Luis Obispo .....	13 50.2	19 78.2
San Mateo County (exclusive of) .....	6 120.0	2 41.7
San Mateo .....	21 52.5	13 32.9
Burlingame .....	.....	1 333.0
Daly City .....	2 333.3	.....
Redwood City .....	1 18.9	1 24.4
South San Francisco .....	.....	1 17.5
Santa Barbara Co. (exclusive of) ..	25 71.4	16 45.4
Santa Barbara .....	21 43.8	22 46.5
Santa Maria .....	22 76.4	21 73.9